

September 2005

RE: FMS Upgrade – JInitiator software

Starting around noon on November 23, 2005, the Department of Education, Office of Student Aid (FSA) will upgrade our Financial Management System (FMS) to a new version. The upgrade will impact the following Financial Partner (FP) applications that are accessed through FMS:

- Guaranty Agency Financial Reporting (GAFR--Forms 2000)
- Lender Reporting System (LaRS (formally ED Form 799))
- Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP)/Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (SLEAP)
- Lender Application Process (LAP)

You will be required to download additional software to access the upgraded forms. As a user of these FP applications, this message is intended to inform you about how these changes will impact you and steps you will need to take to gain access to the upgraded software.

When will the upgrade occur?

Thanksgiving weekend. The current plan is to shut down online access to GAFR--Forms 2000, LaRS, LEAP/SLEAP, and LAP around noon on Wednesday, November 23rd, 2005. During the upgrade, access to the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) to submit GAFR-Forms 2000 and LaRS transactions will still be available.

Files received through the SAIG are expected to be processed on Monday, November 28th. The online forms will be available for general use on Monday, November 28th.

What is the impact on GA and Lender payments?

Web based submissions:

- GA invoices received by November 17th are expected to be approved for processing before the Upgrade
- GA and Lender web based submissions (e.g., non-SAIG) will not be possible between noon Wednesday, November 23rd and Monday morning, November 28th.

SAIG submissions:

- Lender invoices submitted through the SAIG before 6:00 pm EST on November 22nd will be processed before noon on Wednesday November 23rd
- Processing of GA and Lender invoices submitted through the SAIG after 6:00 pm EST on November 22nd is expected to resume on Monday, November 28th

Will I need to do anything to get access to the new release?

Just log into the system as you normally would do. In order to run the upgraded version of FMS, new software (i.e., JInitiator) will need to be loaded on your machine. This software enables your web browser to display the online GAFR--Forms 2000, LaRS, and LEAP/SLEAP forms. The software needed to access these forms will be downloaded automatically to your PC when you first try to login; however, you must have administrator rights to your PC to allow the software to be installed. The JInitiator software is approximately 8 MB so we strongly recommend that you download the software before you need access to FMS. The following reflects the estimated time to download the JInitiator software:

28.8 bps	40 minutes
56 Kbps	20 minutes
Cable/DSL (250 Kb)	5 minutes
T1 (1.5 Mb)	43 seconds

If necessary, we can mail you a CD with the software. Please contact us to make the arrangements to receive a CD through the mail. Our contact information is listed at the bottom of this message.

How will current policies and procedures change in the new release?

Current policies and procedures related to the online forms will not change in the new release. The upgrade is limited to migrating existing functionality to the upgraded version of FMS.

What new hardware will be needed for to run FMS?

No new PC hardware is needed. If your current system can run the current version of FMS, then you will be able to run the upgraded version of FMS.

How will the Upgrade team help users prepare? Do I need additional training to perform my job?

Making sure that users' concerns are addressed and that users will be fully prepared for the new release are primary goals of the Upgrade team and FP. Because the upgrade does not bring any radical changes, you should be able to perform your job in the new version without difficulty. Before the upgrade, you will receive a document explaining the minor changes in navigating through the forms. Updates to the user guides are planned as well and are expected to be available after the upgrade.

Who can I contact with more questions about the upgrade?

For lender questions, please send an email to FSA_LR@ed.gov or call Angela Roca-Baker at (202) 377-3322.

For GA questions, please send an email to FSA_GAR@ed.gov or call Sandra Simmons at (202) 377-3332.

For LEAPS/LEAP questions, please send an email to Greg.Gerrans@ed.gov or call him at (202) 377-3304.